1: Glacken E-5 (1951-1952) 1953 AC7 Okinawa AC7

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Generalities on the Population History of Okinawa Island

Virtually nothing is known, to my knowledge, of the growth of population in Okinawa in historic times. Early travellers made some estimates, but they gave no basis for them. In a previous chapter, it was mentioned that the introduction of the sweet potato in the early 17th century must have allowed a greater population on the island than had hitherto been the case. No doubt also malaria and other diseases kept the population down, at least until the latter part of the 19th century.[1] This ignorance of population growth extends down to recent history.

There seems to have been very little immigration to the Ryukyus and the population has probably been homogeneous for long periods of time. There were many Japanese in Okinawa, but these were largely in the towns and main cities. Most of them left after the war.[2] This meant that the population of Okinawa continued to be made up of preponderantly the native born, though in recent years there has been some immigration of Amamians.

Emigration during the 20th century has been the outstanding fact in the population history of the island. Little is known of the nature of this emigration, but it is believed to have started in the early years of the twentieth century. Until World War II, emigration was the answer to the problem of a population that was growing beyond the ability of the island's resources to support it. It has been estimated that the emigration from Okinawa prefecture in the period 1920-1940 was over 193,400 persons. This represented a loss of 98% of the estimated natural increase for the 1920-1940 period. It was 34% of the prefecture's total 1920 population.[3]

The Okinawan campaign, also, was accompanied by large scale displacements of people who remained on the island. It was estimated that in a pre-invasion shifting of the population, over 3/4 of the people

[Text continues on top of p. 60--analyst]

1 Dr. Green in 1853 estimated the population of Okinawa at 150,000 or possibly 200,000. But this was only a crude guess. Hawks, Perry's expedition to Japan, II, 36. For population estimates prior to World War II, see CA Handbook, as cited, 45-51.

2 As of Nov. 30, 1946, 57,345 Japanese, 1,755 Koreans, and 21 Formosans had been repatriated from the Ryukyus, with 3,706 Japanese remaining to be repatriated. See note 3 following.

3 Newman, Marshall T. and Eng, Roman, L. The Ryukyu people, a biological appraisal. Amer. Journ. of physical anthropology, n.s., 5 (1947), 113-57. Reference on pp. 135-36. This estimate was made by subtracting the estimated natural increase from the total increase, 1920-40, making allowances for the under registration of births. On post-war population history immediately following the war, see pp. 135-46 of this article.

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the war, the upper stratum of society consisted of Japanese plus a few highly placed Okinawans. With the departure of the Japanese, there was no well developed class structure among the Okinawans to succeed to the Japanese hierarchy. Today in these villages, there are inequalities in economic well-being, and certain individuals or groups have greater prestige than others. But these, I am convinced, are not to be traced to a class structure. Any division of the village into upper, middle, and lower classes would be artificial and would put a strain on the facts. Differences, where they appear, are the result of individual qualities, such as age, the possession of land or money, or personal character.

In the old Loochooan kingdom, there was a rigid class stratification based on the Chinese model. The Japanese abolished the Loochoo nobility after the islands became a province, but, according to Furness (1899), "the people still cling to the old custom."[1] Despite the abolition of the nobility, distinctions between noble and commoner were made up to the recent war. In the family registers, descendants of the Loochooan nobility (shizoku) were so designated. But all villagers agreed that these distinctions had no meaning or value, either for preferment in the Japanese service, or for one's social standing among his countrymen. For all practical purposes, everyone was a commoner. Since the war, the fact that one is a descendant of the Okinawan nobility is, if possible, even more inconsequential. No notation is made in the family register. Most men over 35 can tell instantly whether a given surname is of noble or common origin.

The number of these descendants of nobles must be very great. Chamberlain in 1895 reproduced a table, which he said he had every reason to believe was accurate, showing an absurdly high proportion of nobles to commoners. These statistics were from the census of 1891 and for the entire Ryukyus:[2]

	Household Heads	Families
Princes	2	35
Nobility and Gentry	22,567	95,082
Common People	57,981	235,213
Total	80,550	330,330

1 Life in the Luchu islands, as cited, 7. For rank distinctions based on caps, stockings, sashes, and hair pins, see Simon, as cited, 155, 156-59. Hawk's Perry's expedition, as cited, Vol. I, 224, Vol. II, 48. Basil Hall also gives rank orders in an appendix. Perry considered government by this nobility very oppressive. The CA Handbook Ryukyu (Loochoo) Islands gives the historical background of the class structure and its manifestations in government.

2 In the article cited from the Geo. Jour. 5 (1895), 298.

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its area at night (an informant hastened to add that these were not Yamada women). The unit and the village cooperated in repairing roads, the unit supplying equipment and the village labor. The unit also lent equipment for levelling the school grounds and for the 'undōkai' (sports event) lent the school a public address system. At Christmas of 1952 and again in 1953 the unit gave a Christmas party for the school children. The first year only 40 went but the second year nearly 200 went and all received presents. Two that were shown me later were a plastic car and a plastic fire truck; one was marked 65 cents. They were displayed with obvious pride. The school children in turn had sent a bundle of art work to the unit for the Perry Festival. 621 199 727

According to the villagers, late in 1953 the CO of the unit was transferred and the unit was placed under the command of the CO of another unit some miles away. This, they said, had meant the end of the monthly meetings and a decline in the good relations that had existed. The villagers' worries may have been without foundation. The last Christmas party was given after the alleged shift in command. However, some changes were occurring; for example, prostitution had reentered the village.

Informal Relations In addition to the help given to the school by the unit, certain individuals from the unit had also contributed something to it. One man is said to have taught English classes twice a week for about six months. Many of the men of the unit habitually come to the school grounds to play ball. Several are said to come two and three times a week, others come less frequently. Negro soldiers as well as whites come. They play baseball and volleyball with the men teachers and have also taught them basketball.

A few of the villagers have gained financially from the presence of the unit. In Ajimaa where the school is located there are four shops and at Kuraha there is one shop and another establishment that was formerly a cafe. The Ajimaa shops probably rarely sell anything to the soldiers, but the Kuraha shop has several steady customers for "Okinawa Gin", a rather strong variety of 'awamori'. The cafe formerly sold drinks to a regular clientele from the unit, but recently the owner invested in a taxi, has not made as much on it as he had expected and so has not had the capital for stock. There is also a laundry in Kuraha operated by a couple from Amami which does washing for men in the unit. 621 199 727 444 [278]

Several men in the unit are renting houses for their "honeys". (The term "honey" is widely used by both Americans and Okinawans for an American's Okinawan mistress.) At the time I worked in Yamada there were five "honeys", all in Kuraha, three renting one house and two another. All five were from outside the village; one was from Amami, a relative of the laundry people. According to one informant, the relationships between the soldiers and these women had been established at Senaha, Yomitan-son, a small cafe and brothel area to which some of the men of the unit go; after establishing the relationships there the men had brought the women to this village next to their unit. It was my impression that there was not much contact between these outsiders and the villagers. 621 199 727 836

However, there are several Yamada women who have been the mistresses of American soldiers in the past and there are several half-white children in 621 144 563

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621 the village. The oldest of the children is in school; she is the product of
144 a brief affair during the early days of the occupation. While some informants
563 showed some reluctance to discuss the half-white children, by forgetting that they existed until reminded of them, I saw no evidence that the children suffered any discrimination. There are also several Yamada women living outside Yamada, particularly in Ishikawa, with Americans and Filipinos; several of
621 these have mixed-blood children. Some of the Yamada women who are "married"
582 to Americans have attempted to maintain their relationship with their own
177 families and establish some kind of relationship between their families and their "husbands". On New Year's, when family calls are in order, two sisters who were both living with Americans at another village brought their "husbands" to pay their respects to their grandfather. I was in the old man's house when one of the girls apreared with her American. The American behaved quite properly, taking off his shoes and sitting cross-legged on the mat opposite the grandfather. The grandfather greeted him with dignity and reserve. The girl, who had acquired a fair command of English, translated a few sentences and looked very pleased with herself. Drinks were exchanged and the visit was over. Further contact was hardly possible, but this sort of gesture was probably sufficient to demonstrate to the family and to others that the relationship was a serious one. Most relationships are less serious.

621 The former cafe in Kuraha was said to have had women available for
727 prostitution several years ago, but the CO of the local unit who held the
177 meetings with the villagers is said to have disapproved of prostitution in the village and therefore the women left. In the spring of 1954, however,
548 another prostitute was at the cafe, even though it was not operating as such, and a new brothel was established at Ajimaa. There a 'Mama-san' ("madame" in GI Japanese) rented a house for herself and her three girls. The house is one of the newer tile-roofed buildings; it is just below the school grounds and across the highway; it is the property of the brother-in-law of one of the school teachers. Since the shortest way to the place from the unit is directly across the school ground, this was the route taken one afternoon by the three gaudily painted girls as they led a soldier home. I did not have much opportunity to discuss the matter with many people but got the following reaction from one informant: "On the one hand the brothel is good because people are making money; on the other hand it is bad because it makes a bad environment. If anyone complained about it, probably the owners of the house would say that the person complaining is just envious because of the money they are making in rent. Probably even the school teachers could not complain. One cannot interfere with a person's way of making money. The only way it could be stopped would be for the whole village to stop it." This was a clear
[181] expression of two of the basic themes of Okinawan culture, themes that have been mentioned before in connection with other problems; first, one must not interfere in another's livelihood, and second, one must not stand alone; action must be group action. This informant was not overly concerned about the possible bad effects of the presence of the brothel below the school on the school children. Some of the school teachers may have been, yet they too were probably as unwilling to take action individually.

621 While some Yamada people have profited by the presence of the unit,
727 others have suffered some loss. Considerable land is still not available to its owners and while they have received rental from it the amount is not